

FELTING IN THE WASHINGMACHINE

After 1 fruitless effort to produce felt from my Shetland wool, I discovered that I was not only very lazy, but I also had a problem with my hands and my back.

This way of felting was not my cup of tea and I began my first attempts to produce felt in the washing machine some 14 years ago.

My previous felting course and my knowledge of wool came in handy.

First I used reflective lace curtain, smoother than normal lace curtain, but not smooth enough. Many times I tried desperately to separate the felt from the lace curtain, but that was very hard work. It had its positive sides though; I discovered you can make wonderful combinations using lace curtain and thin layers of wool.

Let's say it was a learning experience and I had many.

But I wanted flat, supple felted fabric. I bought some polyester fabrics and started to experiment. I made a note of everything I did. And I experienced that every washing machine is different!

I improved, made better fabrics and got more inspiration.

Now I make my own creations, I cut the felt and make hats, body warmers, jackets etc.

I combine knitting work with fur and beautiful woollen fabrics with wonderful structures.

It is wonderful and inspiring, the sky is the limit.

Some points to consider:

1. For the best results, use machine carded wool.
2. Make a note of everything you do, temperature, washing program, washing powder, time.
3. Use only washing-powder and no soap flakes.
4. Don't use 'improved' washing powder that you can use at low temperatures. (another learning experience!)
5. Put a very thin layer of washing-powder over the carded wool
6. Roll it as firm as you can to make a nice smooth and flat felt.
7. Use only very good safety pins.
8. You can combine these rolls with the normal washing.
9. Wash in the washing machine at 60 ° for about 2 hours.
10. When you want to make patterns with different colours, make all the felt the same day.
11. All rolls should be washed twice, Turn the felt when you wash it the second time. You can put pieces of wool, yarn on it to make patterns.
12. Never use fabric softener
13. Finally iron the felt with lots of steam at high temperature for a nice result.
14. Felt doesn't fray, so you can put the layers on top of each other and zigzag with the same colour to make almost invisible seams.

On the website Fair Isle kunt you can see what you can make of this kind of felt. We made a little film to explain things: <http://www.shetlandschapen.nl/fi-1-n1.html> go to felting in the washing machine.

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